



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
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Alabama Soldier serves in third war

By Capt. Natalia Mercedes-Williams
18th CSSB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ-EAST, Iraq — A lot has changed since Sgt. 1st Class Hershel Mayfield was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1969. Mayfield, a native of Tallassee, Alabama, has been serving for 39 years with the 158th Maintenance Co., from the Alabama Army National Guard. He served one year as an active duty Soldier and 38 years with the National Guard. During this period, he was deployed to Vietnam in 1969, Kosovo in 1996, and currently to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mayfield became an infantryman and went to Fort Polk, Louisiana in 1969. He was sent to Vietnam to serve under the 101st Airborne Division, where he conducted daily patrols throughout the jungle. During his one year deployment to Vietnam, he was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, a Bronze Star Medal, Vietnam Service Member, and the Vietnam Air Service Medal.

“Warfare and the enemy are different each time you deploy because of new equipment, different views on warfare tactics and strategies, and improved technology that is helping units to have higher survival rates,” said Mayfield.

Mayfield knew he wanted to continue serving his country as a Soldier and decided to join the National Guard, re-classing as a Light-Wheel Vehicle Mechanic..

“The base was adjacent to my home, I just got married, and in order to have freedom, someone has to do the job,” said Mayfield.

Mayfield believes that his experience has helped shape the Soldiers of the 158th Maint. Co.

I was able to train, maintain, and transition Soldiers from the M14 to the M16A1, as soon as he arrived to his new unit.”

Mayfield gives thanks to his wife of 30 years, Sheila, and his family for supporting him throughout his military career and dealing with his absence due to three deployments and numerous training events.

“It is a way of life and they’ve learned to live in it.”



Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Hershel Mayfield, 158th Maintenance Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, stands in front of the company's sign where he's been a Soldier for the past 39 years. (Photo by Capt. Natalia Mercedes-Williams)